

# How to start decolonising structures

## Strategies for deconstructing colonialism in your organisation

### Yielding Power

- ❑ Constitute staff associations with an explicit mandate to discuss organisational and systemic issues of unintended and unexplored discrimination. These issues may include staff conditions, office arrangements, travel and health entitlements, access to learning and development, and access to leadership opportunities.
- ❑ Allocate a per centage of a senior black or brown staff member's role to building the capacity of a more junior black or brown staff member to engage effectively with white colleagues. Make sure other staff recognise that engaging across cultures and power structures is a skill set that needs support.
- ❑ Hold organisation-wide, facilitated discussions to explore what decolonisation means for you organisation, and for your team. Take an approach that is part listening project and part truth and reconciliation.

**Note:** Do not enter these discussions if the organisation is not willing to make changes. Creating false hope and expectations will do more harm than doing nothing at all. Work with white staff beforehand to minimise defensiveness in their engagement in the discussions. Work with black and brown staff beforehand to ensure that they feel safe and supported to enter what will be a vulnerable conversation for them.

### Wielding Power

- ❑ Identify frameworks/tools for use in international development which will allow you to work in ways that progress the kind of change you are working towards, but which will also provide legitimacy and authority in the international development industry. Tools such as Political Economy Analysis, Thinking and Working Politically, and a structured approach to partnership brokering will allow you to build power analysis skills and consciously address power in your professional practice. Seek out these tools and get skilled in using them. Become an expert in them within your organisation. Build a community of practice with other black and brown development professionals who are also using these tools.
- ❑ Ask for space and time for black and brown staff to engage in ongoing reflection to amplify their concerns in a constructive manner. Consider setting up regular 'health checks' to monitor the organisational environment around black and brown staff challenging organisational inequities or systemic biases/discrimination. Use external black and brown consultants to facilitate these sessions. Use one-to-one discussion to prepare the broader group sessions and to allow for open sharing.